

DCA Emergency Shelter Grantees Support Standards

Objective: Provide access to services that help participants achieve housing stability

A. Program Philosophy

A.1 Program is guided by a program philosophy that values participant choice, promotes respect between staff and participants, and utilizes a strengths based approach to promoting housing stability.

A.2 Services are provided in a safe and supportive environment, where crises are minimized through the implementation of comprehensive crisis prevention strategies.

A.3 Services provided are individualized and culturally competent.

B. Training and Supervision

B.1 Agency holds staff meetings at least once a month to discuss program issues and participants' progress and service needs. In the case of specialty services, qualified personnel (as evidenced by applicable degree and experience in service delivery) are present at staff meetings to provide supervision.

B.2 Any staff member that delivers HSS services funded by DCA attends mandatory DCA Housing Support training.

C. Access to Services

C.1 Agency makes every effort to ensure participant has access to the following types of services by providing services themselves or through other community agencies with whom they have agreements:

Housing Services (e.g. assistance obtaining housing and remaining housed, education on tenant rights and responsibilities, support addressing potential threats to housing stability)

Skills Training (e.g. activities of daily living, household management, budgeting and money management, credit and debt counseling, personal safety, use of community resources, use of public transportation, interpersonal communication)

Support Services (e.g. educational services, crisis intervention, transportation, legal assistance, case advocacy, parent education and family support, child care, accessing mainstream resources and benefits)

Health Services (e.g. routine medical and dental care, substance abuse and mental health services, medication management and/or monitoring, general health education, harm reduction)

Employment and Vocational Support (e.g. work habits, skills and self-awareness essential to employability; writing resumes, completing job applications, and preparing for interviews; finding and accessing local employment resources and placement options including on-the-job training)

C.2 Agency maintains a current resource directory for all staff. At a minimum, the directory contains information regarding where participants can access each of the types of services listed above, eligibility requirements of other service providers, intake procedures, and available services of each resource.

C.3 Participants have access to some type of crisis support services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

C.4 Agency only provides specialty services for which they are qualified and for which they have received specific training.

C.5 Agency does not duplicate services that are readily available through other mainstream agencies in the community.

C.6 Agency participates in any local or regional planning and discussions of service gaps pertaining to homelessness.

D. Screening and Intake

D.1 Participants receive the Barriers to Housing Stability assessment within three working days of intake in order to identify areas of need.

D.2 Any participant not meeting program eligibility criteria or receiving only short-term, critical need services is referred to other appropriate services. Every reasonable effort is made to enter these participants into Pathways.

D.3 A participant file is initiated upon intake into the program. Intake information on participants providing authorization is entered into Pathways in a timely manner. Current housing status, employment status and mainstream benefits status should be updated in Pathways.

E. Service Planning and Delivery

E.1 Each individual participates in the development and ongoing review of housing stability goals. Housing stability goals and progress toward goals should be tracked in Pathways unless authorization is not obtained.

E.2 Participants have contact with their housing support provider at least twice per month. Contact occurs more frequently during the first three months of services.

E.3 Progress toward goals is regularly documented in Pathways. Referrals to outside agencies are followed up on and documented in Pathways through the housing stability goals.

E.4 When multiple agencies are simultaneously serving the same participant, there is evidence of interagency collaboration.

F. Case Closing and Follow-Up

F.1 Emergency shelters and supportive service providers will attempt to update the current housing status, employment status and mainstream benefits status of a participant 90 days after the Barriers to Housing Assessment is completed. If the participant is no longer receiving services with the agency at that time, reasonable effort is made to follow-up with the individual in order to update status.

F.2 Participants leaving transitional or permanent supportive housing should be contacted at 30, 90 and 180 days after they leave the program at which time their current housing status, employment status and mainstream benefits status should be updated in Pathways. If the participant should require additional support at the time of follow-up, the agency will facilitate access to appropriate services available at their agency or with another provider in the community. The agency makes every effort to ensure that even after a case is closed, the participant remains in some type of stable housing.

F.3 Criteria for termination from the program are clearly defined and communicated to participants. If a participant is asked to leave the program, the organization makes every effort to link the person with more appropriate services. Current housing status should be updated in Pathways.

F.4 If a participant leaves a transitional or permanent supportive housing program without warning, the agency will make an effort to locate and follow-up with the participant. Providers must make every effort to refer a participant who no longer wishes to receive services to another appropriate service provider. Current housing status should be updated in Pathways.

G. Documentation

G.1 Agency will comply with all documentation requirements including entry of all relevant participant information into Pathways Compass in a timely manner.

G.2 If a participation refuses to provide authorization to enter their information into Pathways, equivalent documentation (Barriers to Housing Stability assessment, housing stability Goals and updated progress toward goals) is kept in the case file. In addition, documentation of their refusal to enter information into Pathways must be kept in their case file.

G.3 Agencies will update current status fields in Pathways Compass at designated time periods (intake, discharge and 30, 90 and 180 days post discharge for transitional and permanent supportive housing; intake, discharge and 90 days post assessment for emergency shelter and supportive services; intake and 180 days post assistance for prevention) and when significant changes in status occur.

Updated Information about the Housing Support Standards is posted at:
<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/housing/specialneeds/programs/HousingSupportStandards.asp>